

# MULAN'S GREAT UPWARD DRIVE TOWARD ANDROCENTRISM IN MULAN IN DISNEY BELOVED TALES BY JANE BRIERLY, ROBYN BRYANT AND STEPHANIE WERNER

(PERJUANGAN MULAN MELAWAN ANDROCENTRISME DALAM MULAN DI DALAM CERITA  
DISNEY KARYA BRIERLY, ROBYN BRYANT, DAN STEPHANIE WERNER)

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## ABSTRAK

Makalah ini memaparkan tentang representasi tokoh perempuan terutama dalam menggunakan dorongan menjadi lebih untuk merespon androsentrisme dalam *Mulan in Disney Beloved Tales*. *Mulan* adalah salah satu cerita pendek yang ditulis oleh Jane Brierly, Robyn Bryant dan Stephanie Werner yang dicetak pada tahun 2001 di Kanada. Androsentrisme yang dialami oleh tokoh perempuan akan dipaparkan. Dorongan menjadi lebih unggul juga akan dibahas dan dikaitkan dengan respon tokoh perempuan terhadap androsentrisme yang dialaminya. Pembahasan akan dikaitkan dengan representasi perempuan dalam karya sastra. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah pendekatan feminis dan psikologi. Pendekatan feminis digunakan untuk mengetahui posisi tokoh perempuan dalam cerita dan bagaimana si tokoh direpresentasikan. Pendekatan psikologi digunakan untuk mengetahui kondisi kejiwaan sang tokoh dan respon terhadap androsentrisme yang dialaminya. Metode penelitian dilakukan secara deduktif dimana pembahasan dimulai dari yang umum ke spesifik. Data didapatkan dari penelitian pustaka dan internet. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Mulan*, tokoh perempuan utama, mengalami tiga jenis androsentrisme, yaitu perempuan sebagai media reproduksi, konsep etika, dan peperangan. *Mulan* menggunakan dorongan untuk bangkit dalam merespon ketiga androsentrisme yang dialaminya. *Mulan* direpresentasikan secara positif sehingga memberikan citra yang baik tentang tokoh perempuan dalam karya sastra tersebut.

**Kata Kunci:** dorongan menjadi lebih unggul, dongeng, *Mulan*, kritik sastra feminis, androsentrisme, patriarki

## ABSTRACT

*This paper seeks to outline the representation of woman character specifically in using her drive in responding to androcentrism in *Mulan in Disney Beloved Tales*. It is one of short stories written by Jane Brierly, Robyn Bryant and Stephanie Werner and published in 2001 in Canada. The androcentrism undergone by woman main character will be discussed. The great upward drive will be discussed and related to the woman main character's response to androcentrisms. This will be placed in the context of woman representation in literary works. The approaches used in this discussion are feminist and psychological approach. Feminist approach is used to know the woman character's position in the story and how she is represented. Psychological approach is used to know the psychological state and the response of the main character toward the androcentrisms in the story. The method of the study used in this thesis is deductive method from the general discussion to the specific discussion. The data are collected through library and cyber research. The result of the research shows that *Mulan*, the main woman character experiences three kinds of androcentrisms namely woman for reproduction, ethical concept and warfare. She uses her great upward drive in responding the three androcentrisms. The representation of *Mulan* is made very positively that gives good values about woman character in the literary work.*

**Keywords:** great upward drive, tales, *Mulan*, feminist critique, androcentrism, patriarchy.

## 1. Introduction

Women in patriarchal generally considered less important than men due to many reasons. One of the reason is the nature or biological reason.

Selden mentions that women have made inferiors and the oppression has been compounded by men's belief that women are inferiors by nature

(1985:129-130). Being considered inferior and naturally weak, women are expected to be submissive to men. Women are considered inferior not only physically but also intellectually. Tucker states that in Victorian period, the conviction that men and women differed not only biologically but also intellectually, psychologically and emotionally which supports a belief in the 'separate spheres' – the public is for men and the private is for women (1999:194-195). It shows that women are seen pejoratively in patriarchal society.

Patriarchy is a set of values that make men as the ruler of the society. Millet mentions that term of 'patriarchy' (rule of father) is to describe the cause of women's oppression and subordinates the female to the male or treats the female as an inferior male (in Selden, 1985:131-132). Patriarchy has similar with androcentrism. Androcentrism is the values that everything in the world is made for men. Gilman mentions, "the whole world; his because he was male and the whole world of woman was the home; because she was female" (1911:8). The androcentric (man-made) world does not have any space for women. Women are only the complementary object in androcentric world.

The reality of the world is sometimes reflected in the literary works. Spacks mentions that literary situation reflected actualities of society at large (2006:6). The picture of women in the androcentric society is also reflected in the literary works. In literary works, women are represented in a certain way by author that results stigmatization about women themselves. In canon literary works, authors usually represent women in mild, weak and inferior character. Most of canon literary works shows how women do not have power in determining their own lives and values.

However, the new era of literary works has given chance of representing women differently. Some literary works have shown the thought of women into the writing, given the better representation of women as main or supporting characters and provided material of reading as women.

*Mulan* by Jane Brierly, Robyn Bryant and Stephanie Werner is a short story from Disney

Beloved Tales. It is about a young girl living in Chinese androcentric society. It describes the struggle of a woman in androcentric society. The main character, Mulan, is portrayed as outspoken and perseverant woman.

The problem starts when Mulan cannot please the Matchmaker in the marriage arrangement procedure. Failing an arranged marriage procedure is a failure in social recognition and acceptance. From that on, the journey of being oppressed in androcentric values begins with up and down experiences. She tries so hard to survive the oppression with her drive.

It is very interesting to know how the main character is represented in the story in order to overcome the oppressions from her society. The setting of the story is the history of China in 200 BC. The story is published in 2000 by American authors and publisher. The character and setting are from the East, but the authors and publisher are from West. These factors make *Mulan* by Jane Brierly, Robyn Bryant and Stephanie Werner interesting to observe in the research.

There are some problems to discuss in the research. The first problem is what the androcentrims toward Mulan are from her society. The second problem is whether Mulan uses great upward drive toward the androcentrims. The last problem is how the representation of Mulan is in *Mulan*.

## 2. Research Methods

This research is to analyze the problems encountered by the main character of *Mulan*, interpret the problems with the theory of feminism (Androcentrism) and psychology (Great Upward Drive) and finally evaluate how the story can relate to the readers through the problems presented in the story. It is categorized as literary criticism as Peck and Coyle says that Literary Criticism is usually regarded as the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of literary works (1984:149).

As the object of research is the woman main character, this research is also categorized as feminist literary criticism. One of the aspects to observe in feminist literary criticism is to criticize

the woman representation within literary works. According to Showalter, Feminist Critique focused on woman as reader in which it subjects include the images and stereotypes of women in literature (1979:128). The representation of woman in literary works can be observed to conduct feminist literary criticism.

To know the representation of the woman in *Mulan*, the researcher observe the woman character in facing the oppression from her androcentric society within the story. In viewing the woman character's response toward the oppression in the story, the psychological theory is used in this thesis. Scott mentions, "Psychology can be used to explain fictitious characters" (1962:72). By knowing the psychological response of the female main character toward the oppression, woman main characters' strength can be recognized whether she is strong or weak in coping the oppression. This thesis will focus on how the female main character responds to androcentric oppression using the psychological strength called great upward drive. By acknowledging the oppression toward woman main character and her response to it, the representation of woman character can be noticed. The representation can be made in positive or negative way.

The method is analyzing the literary work in this thesis is deductive. It starts from general discussion to the specific one. Shaw states that, "in deduction, movement of thought, expressed or implied is always from the general to particular" (1972:107). The application of this thesis with the theories related with the woman main character in *Mulan*. It discusses how the woman character copes with androcentrism using her psychological drive in order to know her representation in the story.

The main data of this research are taken from *Mulan*, a short story in *Disney Beloved Tales* written by Jane Brierly, Robyn Bryant and Stephanie Werner. The book is published in Canada by Brimar Publishing inc. other data are also gathered from several books, dictionaries and websites.

### 3. Findings

*Mulan* authored by Jane Brierly, Robyn Bryant and Stephanie Werner portrays the society with androcentric cultures which treat women in pejorative way. *Mulan*, the woman main character in the story experiences some oppressions due to the androcentric cultures.

She experiences three kinds of androcentrisms since she cannot meet the expectation of the androcentric values or requirements of being a good woman. The androcentrisms are women reproduction, ethical concept and warfare. Androcentrism on woman reproduction occurs to *Mulan* since she is not chosen as a bride in an arranged marriage and considered as a disgrace for her family. Androcentrism on ethical concept happens when she speaks out about his father before the Imperial Council in the public. Androcentrism on warfare takes place when she decides to impersonate her father in the war and gets revealed.

She has failed to meet the values of becoming a good woman in the society who is expected to be a submissive wife and nurtured mother, submissive to society by not speaking up, and stay away from the war. She has broken all the androcentric values. Instead, she does the values promoted in feminism.

In responding the androcentrism, *Mulan* is able to overcome her inferiority by using her great upward drive. As the results, she gains positive closures for androcentrisms that occur to her. In terms of women reproduction issue, she finally has the chance to have natural man-woman relationship without matchmaking process. In androcentric ethical concept, she gains respect and honour from the Emperor by receiving medallion and rebel leader's sword as well as an offer to fill in the political position in the empire. In warfare, she survives the war and even save the Emperor and the people of China. With great upward drive, she converts her androcentric failure's inferiority to be superior for herself and surprisingly for her androcentric society.

*Mulan's* representation is made in a very positive angle by the authors. They show their support to the woman main character in the story

by exposing both personal and communal superiority. Mulan's superiority over self-inferiority has given understanding to the readers that the woman character in the story is not as weak as women's portrait in the androcentric culture. She is portrayed as creative woman in coping the oppressive situation and switching it into a chance of success.

#### 4. Discussion

##### **The Androcentrism toward Mulan from her Society**

Mulan is the only daughter of Fa Zhou family who lives in a village in China. She expected to see the Matchmaker, someone in charge to choose a young woman to be a man's bride. Being chosen as a bride and get into an arranged marriage is a standard of androcentric society to the young woman in the family. Meeting the social standard means honour for the family.

A woman is expected to be good daughter and submissive wife. Gorsky states that standard woman in patriarchal society is those who owns virtuosity, obedience toward father, and performance of being submissive wife and nurturing mother (1992:3). Gilman expresses that in androcentric culture, women are pejoratively portrayed as less than half of race whose function is merely made for reproduction (1911:18). Being able to fulfill the reproduction purposes is important for women in androcentric society. A woman needs to get wedded in order to fulfill her social requirements to be a wife and a mother. The bride is expected to bear children to continue the family clan.

Androcentrically, Mulan belongs to her father. As she enters the process of matchmaking for marriage, she also enters the hand over process from her father to her future husband if she is chosen by the Matchmaker. Gilman argues, "When women became the property of men; sold and bartered; 'given away' by their paternal owner to their maternal owner" (1911:31). Mulan may not be bartered for money, but she is made into certain ways to bring the family honour upheld before the society. She is not asked whether she wants to do the matchmaking or does not. She is

made into the androcentric matchmaking process without being asked first.

Unfortunately, Mulan is not able to fulfill the family's expectation for the matchmaking process. She displeases the Matchmaker during the audition and as the results, she is mocked and not chosen as a bride. Worse, the Matchmaker scolds her.

"You are a disgrace!" the Matchmaker screamed, tears streaming down her face. "You may look like a bride, but you will never bring your family honour!"

Back home, Mulan looked at her reflection in a pool of water and didn't recognize herself. She saw a young woman with perfect hair and make-up, an elegant beauty. She didn't think she could ever be that young woman in the reflection.

Mulan had done the unthinkable – she had brought dishonor on her family. She washed the make-up of her face and let down her hair. She stared down the comb her mother had given her (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:159).

Mulan feels so low. She cannot fulfill the standard of being a perfect bride to choose. She leaves the house in effort to bring home honour for her family and she comes home with a disgrace. Osteson elaborates that it is not unusual for a subordinate to feel depressed, to experience despair, and consider suicide as it is often the result of the internalization of the dominant group's beliefs that those who are subordinates are substandard, defective and inferior (2004:21). Mulan feels inferior with her failure in the androcentrism of woman for reproduction purposes.

The second androcentric oppression toward Mulan is forbiddance of speaking in public. Even though she speaks the truth but public speaking is not for her. It is not for women to do so. It is only for men. Gilman further argues, "To the man, the whole world was his world; his because he was male; and the whole world of woman was the home; because she was female. She had her prescribed sphere, strictly limited to her feminine

occupations and interests; he had all the rest of life; and not only so, but, having it, insisted on calling it male (1911:23). Mulan's speaking up is seen as a defiant attitude since only men speak in the public. She has no right to be outspoken despite of any reasons (the truth and the fact).

Chi Fu, the Imperial Council, is surprised to see a girl who dares enough to speak in the public about her own father.

Just then, Chi Fu came to announce the Hun invasion. He asked for one man from each household to fight for the Emperor. Mulan's father had no sons so, although he was already injured from the previous war, he stepped forward.

"I am ready to serve the Emperor," Fa Zhou said.

"Please, sir!" Mulan cried out to Chi Fu. "My father has already fought bravely for the Emperor."

Chi Fu was appalled that a young woman could be outspoken.

"Mulan, you dishonour me," her father said. Mulan was not being a proper young lady by speaking up and as only man in the family the honorable thing for her father to do was to serve the Emperor (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:162)

Mulan only tries to ask a little mercy from Chi Fu, the Imperial Council who is in charged for the soldier recruitment for the war. However, Chi Fu feels disgusted with the incident. Man should talk to man. Woman is not supposed to talk to him especially in public. Mulan and her kind should never be considered as fellow human being in his androcentric society.

Knowing that Mulan has crossed the line of courtesy, her father reminds her strongly that she has dishonoured him by speaking out about him. There is nothing she can do about her father's strong reminder.

Not only Chi Fu appalls about woman speaking in public, but the people of China also disrespects the girl talking in public. Mulan does not only receive a negative impression from Chi

Fu and her father but also an additional similar encounters from her society. Nobody pays attention to her when she wants to remind people who are attending the victory celebration in Imperial City.

In the Imperial City, a huge parade was held for Shang and his soldiers in honor of their victory. Mulan rode up next to her former captain and warned him about the Huns. But Shang wouldn't pay her any attention.

"You don't belong here, Mulan. Go home," Shang coolly replied.

Mulan tried to tell the other people about the danger, but everyone ignored her because she was just a girl (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:185).

Another message of truth that Mulan wants to deliver but her society does not pay attention to her important message. She is not even counted as a person who deserve to listen to. Her being of woman has made her invisible before men, before her androcentric society.

The third androcentric oppression is surviving warfare. Mulan comes to an idea to replace her father in the war. The idea of impersonating her father may be based on her personal opinion for keeping her father away from war death. The decision is made and conducted secretly despite of fatal risk; death.

That night, Mulan saw her father practice using his sword. As he raised it above his head, the pain in his injured leg made him lose his balance and fall. Mulan was very worried – if her father went to war, he would surely die. She went to the family shrine to pray to the Fa Family ancestors, and then she had an idea.

Returning to the house, Mulan took her father's sword and used it to cut her hair. Then she tied her hair up like a man's and put on her father's armor. In the place of his conscription notice she left the comb her mother had given her. Then she mounted her horse, Khan, and set off to take her father's

place in the army.

In the middle of the night, as thunder roared overhead, Grandmother Fa awoke and realized that Mulan was one. It was too late to stop her. The entire family was petrified - they knew that the penalty for impersonating a man was death (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:162,164)

As an appropriate lady, Mulan is not supposed to impersonate her father in a war. In Chinese tradition, a woman is only for home affair. Rivkin and Ryan mention that woman is woman, who only becomes a domestic and a wife in certain relation (1988:533). War is not definitely for woman. It is for men. Gilman argues that the male naturally fights, and naturally crows, triumph over his rival and takes the prize – therefore was he made male. Maleness means war (1911:92). Only men can join the war. However, Mulan decides to impersonate his father in the war for her father's safety, away from death. At the same time, she risks another chance of bringing home dishonor and even death penalty if she gets caught.

She needs to cover her true identity to survive the challenge she makes her self by enrolling into military service. She must look and behave like a man to become a convincing man-look soldier. She also must work hard to become a soldier. However, her identity is revealed.

When Mulan awoke, Shang was standing near her, with a disapproving look in his eye. Then Chi Fu came in.

"I knew there was something wrong with you!" Chi Fu yelled, tossing her out into the snow. "A woman!"

"I did it to save my father," Mulan said.

"High treason!" Chi Fu continued.

"I didn't mean for it to go this far," Mulan said weakly. "It was the only way."

When Chi Fu reminded Shang that the penalty for impersonating was a death. Taking Mulan's sword, Shang raised it high above his head (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:179,181)

Mulan is supposed to be killed for impersonating his father. If it truly happens, her dead body would be brought home with full of dishonour to her family. However, since she saves her captain from the avalanche that eventually buries the Huns. Captain Shang finally does not kill her as his gratitude for being saved by her.

Being not dead influences Mulan. She is afraid of going home. She is afraid to face the reality that she has dishonoured Fa family, her own family. She is the subordinate of her society values. Impersonation action may be her mistake despite of her noble intention. However, the society has established the values to keep. As Osteson mentions that the dominants determine the philosophy, values, and morality of the society (2004:17). Disobeying the determined means the violation to the society. The violation means disrespect for self or family.

Mulan cannot bear the feeling of causing severe embarrassment to her family against her androcentric culture. She experiences mistreatment that according to Hanna, Talley and Guindo, leads to psychological distress or emotional pain and suffering (2000:431). Mulan is psychologically suffered with all burden of dishonour in androcentric culture she lives in.

### **Mulan's Great Upward Drive toward the Androcentrism**

Mulan is oppressed with the standard of philosophy, values and morality that must be fulfilled women, including her self in her androcentric culture. In responding to androcentrism, she has sequence of psychological roller coaster. In each androcentric oppression, she has her own way in overcoming her inferiority.

Regarding to her first androcentrism, she wants to be chosen as a bride to please her family. Her fictional goal is to bring honour for her family. Fictional goal is the final achievement that according to Adler can drive human to do everything to make it come true (1930:400). In order to bring the honour home, she must perform the best she can during the audition with the Matchmaker. She does everything, including cheating.

“Mulan,” her father, Fa Zhou, said, “we are counting on you to-”

“To uphold the family honour,” Mulan interrupted. “Don't worry father, I won't let you down.”

Mulan was very nervous as she got already with the help of her mother and grandmother. She had written notes to herself on the inside of her wrist, and they almost washed off in the bathtub. Just before she left, her mother gave her a comb that was a family heirloom, and her grandmother gave her a cricket named Cri-Kee for good luck (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:157).

However, the cheating and the cricket have become the source of her failure in meeting the Matchmaker. Everything she hopes for does not happen accordingly. She feels so low as she cannot uphold the family honour. She fails to complete the task. She feels inferior. Hall and Lindzey argues, “Inferiority means feeling weak and unskilled in the face of tasks that need to be completed. It does not mean being inferior to another people in a global sense” (1985:147).

Mulan feels unskilled for not being able to fulfill the values set by the society. There is nothing she can do about the Matchmaker's decision. She is an obedient daughter who thinks of her family honour. However, she fails to do the other tasks: to be a wife and mother. She loses the chance to be so as she has displeased the Matchmaker.

Related to her second androcentrism, her supreme fictional goal is still to make her family happy. However, her truth and noble intention has made her violating the androcentric values of public speaking. She feels guilty to her father. She wants to stand for her father, but her father and her society do not think she does. They think that she has embarrassed her self and her family. She feels ashamed and inferior for this. However, she keeps on thinking ways to make her father away from war threatening death. Driven by her inferiority, she uses her creative power of her self by taking chance to impersonate her father in the war. It may be a crazy idea especially knowing the price to pay if she gets caught. This is her great upward drive

to overcome her inferiority by becoming a man for war.

As she has decided to impersonate her father, surviving the war has become her fictional goal. This new fictional goal has made her into new (third) androcentric oppression; warfare. In order to survive the war, she has to appear and act like a man during the military service. She has to make sure that no one can recognize her as a woman. She changes her appearance to look like a man by cutting her long hair and putting on her father's armor. She also must act like a man even though she has no idea to be a man in a war.

Mulan has a strong willing in trying to be a man as perfect as possible. However, the reality is not as she thinks. She continues to make mistakes and leads herself to be inferior. Her inferiority has forced her to work harder and harder than other soldiers.

The next day, Shang shot an arrow to the top of the pole and told the soldier to retrieve it.

“This represents discipline, and this represents strength,” he said, giving them two weights. “You need both to reach the arrows.”

Nobody was able to climb the pole. But Mulan worked very hard until one day she managed to reach the arrow by looping the weights together, gaining the respect of the other soldier (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:173).

It is not Mulan's goal to be superior than others. She just want to be as normal as possible during the impersonation. However, it turns out that she shows herself to be ahead than her man-soldier fellows. Pole climbing is her first success after joining the troops. Her great upward drive has taken her to her superiority in defeating her self and making herself to be good and skillful soldier. According to Adler, “It is the feeling of inferiorities that gives birth to the striving for superiorities, and together they make up the 'great upward drive' that pushes us continually to move 'from minus to plus,... From below to above’ (1930:398). Driven by her great upward drive,

Mulan succeeds one skill in the military training.

The success does not mean that the inferiority never comes back. New fictional goal is set to maintain the success. Mulan is happy that she farther away from suspicion about her true identity. To keep things right, she needs to keep performing well in her military task. However, after Mulan's success in pole climbing, she still experiences inferiority roller coaster. Her second inferiority in the warfare is when she makes (another) mistake on the way to designated place of the real war. The carriage she is responsible for, has blown off a rocket which eventually makes her soldier fellows into the Huns' shooting range.

The soldier marched into the snowy mountains when suddenly a rocket went off from within the wagon Khan was leading. From over the next hill arrows came flying. Shang's troops!

"You just gave away our position!" Shang yelled at Mulan. Then he ordered his troops to get out of the Huns' shooting range.

The Imperial soldiers fought back, shooting their rockets at the advancing Huns, who far outnumbered them. It was beginning to look hopeless for Shang's troops.

An idea came to Mulan as she grabbed the last rocket.

Instead of aiming the rocket at Shan-Yu, she pointed it up at the mountain face and lit it Mushu's fiery breath. The rocket created an avalanche, just as Mulan had hoped. When Shan-Yu saw what Mulan had done, he charged at her with his sword, injuring her. But then he was buried under the snow along with the rest of the Huns. Mulan hurried to escape the oncoming waves of snow.

Mulan saw that Shang was about to be overcome by the avalanche. She rode Khan through the rolling waves of snow, saving him just as they were about to tumble over a cliff. Yao tossed them a rope, and Mulan shot the arrow at the end of the rope to the other soldiers, who pulled her and Shang to safety.

"From now on," Shang said to Ping, "you have my trust."

Mulan put a hand to her chest, and when she pulled it back, she saw blood. Then she black

out.

(Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:175,177,178).

Mulan is responsible for Khan, leading the supply wagon. Even though she does not have any idea about what happens with the wagon, but still, the consequences of the incident lay on her shoulder. She is to blame for endangering the troops' life by giving away the troops' position into the Huns' shooting range. She is required to keep secured everything she is responsible for. Driven by her inferiority, she makes a big action in effort to save her troops. She finally can bury the Huns by creating avalanche with the last rocket.

Mulan, one more time has converted her inferiority into superiority. She has paid her mistake with victory over the Huns. However, the victory over mistake that she just has scored brings her into another androcentric inferiority. Her true identity is finally revealed. She has violated the major rule in China; impersonating someone. She is supposed to be killed as her punishment. On the contrary, her great action in burying the Huns and saving her troops and Shang, has saved her for the punishment. Eventually, Shang does not kill her remembering virtues she has done for him.

But instead of killing Mulan, Shang just threw the sword down and said, "A life for a life. My debt is repaid" (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:181).

Shang has paid back Mulan's virtue on him during the avalanche. Killing her is just an ungrateful action toward her kindness. He makes it even. She has saved him in avalanche and he saves her from death penalty. Of course she is then excluded from the military.

However, she still feels that her identity revelation will bring more dishonoured sorrow to her family. Filled with severe inferiority, she thinks that it is her time to confess and head back home to her family.

Then the soldiers marched off, leaving Mulan



alone in the snow. Cri-Kee lit a fire with twigs, but it was too small to be much of use. Mulan shivered with cold and wished she had never left home.

"Maybe I didn't go for my father," she mused. Maybe what I really wanted was to prove that I could do things right, so that when I looked in the mirror, I'd see someone worthwhile.

"But I was wrong. I see nothing," Mulan said, as she picked up her helmet and looked at her reflection in it. "I'm sorry I wasted your time Mushu." .....

Eventually, Mulan decided it was time to get going. "I'll have to face my father sooner or later," she said. "Let's go home." (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:181-182).

Feeling low and desperate, Mulan just reviews her reasons in doing the impersonation of her father. She expresses her self that just wants to do something right in order to be a worthwhile person. She feels that she is not worthy after the failures she makes in fulfilling androcentric values. However, in her inferior state, she has new creative power of her self to determine action that may change her life once more time.

Mulan picked herself up and started to head home. Then she saw Shan-Yu and some of his men emerging from the snow. They were alive! She knew they were heading toward the Imperial City. She jumped onto Khan and headed in the direction they took.

"Home is that way!" Mushu said, pointing behind them.

"I have to do something!" said Mulan.

When Mulan reminded Mushu of his promise to stick together, he agreed to go with her. "Hee-haw!" he shouted as they headed to save the Emperor (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:182).

She cannot believe that the Huns are still alive after the avalanche. It means China is still under threat. The Emperor's life is in danger. She knows she has to go home and deliver dishonor to her family but she also knows that she has chance to do something good for herself and China;

saving the Emperor.

However, in her new fictional goal of saving the Emperor, she does not get easy way. Instead, she gains another inferiority for being distrusted and disbelieved by men in her society when she tries to remind them about the coming Huns. Shang does not trust her anymore because he feels being fooled for trusting a woman whom he thinks as a man. The society does not believe what she says because she is just a girl. Her being as a woman does not give her any privileges to deliver an important message. In her inferiority of being mistreated and ignored, she has another chance to use her creative power of herself in responding the situation for her superiority.

Shang presented Shan-Yu's sword to the Emperor, and the crowd cheered. But just then, a falcon swooped down and snatched the sword from the Emperor's grasp. It was Shan-Yu's falcon, and it returned to where Shan-Yu was hiding atop the palace, disguised as one of the gargoyles. Then the dragon that had been dancing for the crowd was thrown aside, and out popped more Huns. They grabbed the Emperor, and ran into the palace, locking the doors behind them.

All seems lost, but once more Mulan had a plan. Even Shang realized that it was a good idea. She dressed some of her fellow soldiers as women. Shang, Mulan and disguised soldiers used Mulan's pole technique to climb up the columns and into the palace (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:165-186).

Mulan's inferiority never bans her from creative power. She has used the situation to give her chance from being inferiorly distrusted by Shang to be superiorly heard by him and her fellow soldiers. She is the one who has the idea to approach the Huns with pole climbing technique.

It is interesting to observe Mulan's energy to convert her inferiority into superiority with her great upward drive. Her personal superiority has also becomes inspiration and great upward drive to her team. Saving the Emperor is not only her personal fictional goals but also her social interest. According to Adler, social interest consists of

people striving for the 'perfection' (1929:31). To be successful together between Mulan and her team in the mission in saving the Emperor is her social interest. Together, Mulan, Shang and the soldiers are able to save the Emperor from mischievous Shan-Yu and his fellow Huns.

With Shan-Yu out of the way, Chien-Po grabbed the Emperor and used his sash to slide down a rope to the ground.

Shan-Yu was enraged to see the Emperor escape. He wanted to take his revenge on Shang, but when Mulan revealed that she was the soldier from the mountain, who had defeated his army, he ran after her instead.

Mulan led Shan-Yu up onto the palace roof while Mushu led Cri-Kee to the nearby fireworks tower.

With only a fan for a weapon, Mulan managed to avoid Shan-Yu's sword, and grab it from him.

Then Mulan used the sword to pin the Hun to roof, just as Mushu rode a rocket at him. Mushu jumped off the rocket just in time, but Shan-Yu had nowhere to go. He was launched into the tower where all the fireworks were stored. Colour and light lit up the sky (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:189,191).

Mulan, Shang and the soldiers are able to take the Emperor safely from the Huns. Mulan is the one who finishes Shan-Yu, the Huns' leader to an end. She has saved the whole China from the Huns' invasion.

Mulan has finally converted her inferiority into superiority with her great upward drive. She does not gain only personal superiority, but also communal superiority that makes her achieve the superiority together with her team. Her great upward drive also rewards her with honour from the Emperor.

The Emperor thanked Mulan in front of the cheering crowd. "You have saved us all," he said, and then bowed. Mulan bowed back, and he offered her a position on his council.

"With all due respect, your Excellency," Mulan replied, "I think I've been away from

home long enough." (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:191).

The emperor expresses his gratitude to Mulan for saving him and China by bowing to her in front of the people of China. A young woman who is previously disrespected, ignored and considerably substandard has received a bowing respect publicly from the highest leader of androcentric culture. She is in the peak of her victory. She may not intentionally wants to be superior to others, she just wants to do something good that she believes into.

The respect from the Emperor has paid off her suffer of inferiority caused by her inability in meeting the standard to be a good woman in her androcentric culture and mistakes she makes along the journey. In androcentric culture, women are not meant for the war. Mulan is able to break this thought. She wins the war with her ups and downs. Eventually she is the one who can get rid of Shan-Yu and save China forever. She is able to survive and even shows herself as a capable soldier despite of her being; a woman whom previously is underestimated.

The offer from the Emperor to Mulan for filling the council position is also a mind blowing situation. Gilman expresses that in androcentric culture, "women do not understand politics," we are told; "women do not care for politics but the Emperor can see her capacity in the war strategy. It is once more a proof that she has twisted the androcentric values on women's exclusion in politic and war.

Mulan feels that the victory she has scored is not her fictional goal especially to become a politician. She just want to be a worthwhile girl for her family. She wants to bring honour to her family. Therefore, she refuses the offer and indirectly expresses herself in favour of returning home. Knowing her desire to go home, the Emperor presents gifts to her for her family honour.

The Emperor gave her a medallion with his crest on it. "So, your family will know what you have done for me." Then he handed her Shan-

Yu's sword, "So that the world will know what you have done for China," ...

Mulan brought her father the medallion and the sword. "They're gifts," she said, "to honour the Fa family."

"The greatest gift and honour," her father replied, "is having you for a daughter." (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:191,193).

A medallion is a sign of respect from the Emperor personally since there is no one has it in the empire but the Emperor. The owner of medallion gives it to Mulan as his personal respect for her heroic action in saving him from Shan-Yu and his fellows. The sword of Shan-Yu is the sign of invasion conquering. In Mulan's hands, it is the sign of her action in saving China from the Huns' invasion. Mulan has brought home two symbols of respect from the Emperor himself and the people of China to honour her family. The honour she wants to bring home ever since has finally come true. She brings home extraordinary honour from the highest leader of China.

Mulan thinks that those honours are so much important to her family. She thinks that these gifts can possibly mend the irritating relationship she has with his father in public speaking. Much of her surprise, her father expresses that she is the greatest honour he has in his life instead of those gifts. One of her personal inferiorities has met the closure. She does not need to worry anymore about honour and dishonour. She does whatever she believes in and scores honour along the way.

Regarding to matchmaking issue, Shang receives an advice from the most important man in the country that Mulan is a special girl that may not be often met in every dynasty. Indirectly, the Emperor encourages Shang to make the first move to get nearer to Mulan as a woman instead of a soldier.

Shang stood beside the Emperor as they watched Mulan leave.

"The flower that blooms in adversity is the most rare and beautiful of all," the Emperor said.

When Shang didn't understand what he meant, he added, "You don't meet a girl like that in every dynasty!" .....

Just then, Shang appeared at the gate. He said he was bringing back Mulan's helmet.

"Would you like to stay for dinner?" Mulan offered.

"Dinner would be fine." Shang said (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:193).

Shang takes the Emperor's advice wisely. He goes to Mulan's house to return her helmet. In return, she offers him to stay for dinner with her family. Inviting someone for dinner is a sign of respect and probably an opening door for Shang to hopefully be part of Mulan's family in the future.

The move Shang makes shows that Mulan has a chance to have her own personal encounter with a man without an involvement of the matchmaker. If Mulan and Shang eventually get married (which is not obviously mentioned in the story), it may prove that Mulan is androcentrically a good woman; to be a wife and future mother. It may not be proven yet, but at least she has the chance for natural man and woman relationship instead of joining matchmaking.

Mulan uses her maximum capacity in responding to the androcentric oppression she experiences. She uses her inferiority to drive herself to make action in order to be superior. She wants the superiority personally to overcome her personal inferiority. However, it turns out that the superiority has grown in communal scale. She has proven that she is superior to men in her androcentric society although she never intentionally wants it. With her great upward drive, she converts her inferiority into superiority and even gains respect from her androcentric society.

### **The Representation of Mulan in *Mulan***

Authors have full authority to represent the character(s) in any way they want. The characters can be represented in positive or negative way. In the story, the authors can also show their favour or opposing stance toward the character. The stance of the authors can be seen in the character's

representation.

It is obvious that the authors of *Mulan* give very supporting wording in representing Mulan, the woman main character as a persistent woman in responding androcentrism. Persistence means determined and never giving up. Mulan is not depicted as androcentric submissive woman. She has characters that are contradictive with the androcentric values she is expected to be.

Despite of the androcentric oppression she undergoes, she always has a way to work on it. At the end of the story, she is able to conquer the oppression and turn her inferiority into superiority over herself. Further, the superiority turns out to be also over other persons such as her captain and fellow soldiers. The most impressive superiority she scores is saving the Emperor and the people of China by getting rid of Shan-Yu, the leader of the Huns. This way to representation has shown that the authors represent Mulan positively.

Mulan is a girl who always has idea everytime she faces problem. There are four expressions of the authors about Mulan in having a plan or idea to respond to her problems.

Mulan was very worried – if her father went to war, he would surely die. She went to the family shrine to pray to the Fa Family Ancestors, and then she had an idea (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:162)

The Imperial soldiers fought back, shooting their rockets at the advancing Huns, who far outnumbered them. It was beginning to look hopeless for Shang's troops.

An idea came to Mulan as she grabbed the last rocket (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:177).

Then she saw Shan-Yu and some of his men emerging from the snow. They were alive! She knew they were heading towards the Imperial City. She jumped onto Khan and headed in the direction they took.

"Home is that way!" Mushu said, pointing behind them.

"I have to do something!" said Mulan (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:182).

All seemed lost, but once again Mulan had a plan. Even Shang realized that it was a good idea. She dressed some of her soldiers as women. Shang, Mulan and the disguised soldiers used Mulan's pole climbing technique to climb up the columns and into the palace (Brierly, Bryant and Werner, 2001:186).

Mulan is a woman who never runs out of idea. She has her own mind in responding to problems. She is not a common girl who has to wait for a man to decide what to do. Even though she limited in social point of view, she does not allow her androcentric culture limits her thought and action in her personal life, especially in responding the problems she faces. It shows that she is not reflecting an androcentric woman.

Despite of her social limits, Mulan always survives in each of androcentric oppression. In the first androcentric oppression, she fails to meet the social standard for being submissive wife and nurtured mother. Even though she fails in meeting the social standard by disappointing the matchmaker, she can have closure of her failure by eventually having a chance for natural man-woman relationship with Shang who is encouraged by the Emperor.

In the second androcentric oppression, Mulan has problems in ethical concept by speaking up in the public. She thinks that speaking mind is fine but not for her society. For her androcentric society, speaking mind is dishonoring especially about and before men. The consequences of her action have made her into severe oppression by her father and society. However, she pays off the dishonor issue with something huge; an honour and reward from the most important man in the empire. Bringing home the gifts from the Emperor, she also gets affirmation from her father that the honour is actually having her as his daughter. It is obviously clear that she can overcome the second androcentric oppression.

Mulan does not only survive two androcentric oppressions, but also the third one; the warfare. Her decision to impersonate her father has made her into the warfare issue. In androcentric culture,

war is not for women. But she decides to do so. It means she has to succeed her 'undercover mission' to be a man in the war to replace her father. She fails somehow since her action of impersonation is caught and revealed by the Imperial Council. However, once again she is able to convert the failure into victorious action.

The authors of *Mulan* represent Mulan against the image of Chinese women in the Han Dynasty history. Mulan is depicted beyond just an obedient Chinese woman. She is portrayed as creative, strong and decisive woman that does not really reflect an ordinary Chinese woman. It shows that the authors are obviously in favour of woman character in the story. The woman character is pictured as tough, creative (full of ideas), persistent, and even strong character. In line with Eagleton's statement that a literary work should provide role models, instill a positive sense of feminine identity by portraying women who are self-actualizing, whose identities are not dependent on men (2011:212).

*Mulan* provides very positive self-actualizing woman representation. The authors also present the story in the perspective of women. The story clearly elaborates the hardship of woman in the androcentrism but also the effort and strength of woman in dealing with oppression. The final closure of the story is made to put the woman character into positive and even superior position to break all the misconception of androcentric point of view about women.

#### 4. Conclusion

Mulan, the woman main character in *Mulan* experiences three androcentrisms. They are woman for reproduction, ethical concept and warfare. She uses her great upward drive in responding the androcentrisms by changing her inferiority into superiority. She is also represented positively in the story through the exposition of her superiority over herself and also indirectly over men.

*Mulan* gives a new representation of woman character in the literary works. Representation of a strong woman main character in facing the androcentrisms may give new inspiration for

women readers to see the values of being strong woman through the story. It is recommended to have more powerful and insightful stories like *Mulan* to inspire woman readers to have better understanding about woman and authors to write more about women in women's perspective.

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